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ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Situation of human rights in Albania

Report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/57

1. At its fiftieth session, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution 1994/57 entitled "Situation of human rights in Albania", in which it called upon the Government of Albania to pursue its positive steps towards meeting the requirements under the International Bill of Human Rights and other relevant international instruments, by which the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Albanian citizens, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, would be effectively promoted and guaranteed; encouraged technical cooperation between the Centre for Human Rights and the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights, on the one hand, and the Government of Albania, on the other, on the basis of the Agreement concluded on 13 February 1992; requested the Secretary-General (a) to bring the resolution to the attention of the Government of Albania and to invite it to provide information regarding its implementation and (b) to report to the Commission at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. On 2 November 1994 the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights addressed a note verbale to the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations Office at Geneva in which he requested the Government of that country to communicate to him any information or observation it might wish to present in accordance with resolution 1994/57.

3. At the time the present report was being prepared, no response had been received by the Centre for Human Rights from the Government of Albania.

Advisory services and technical assistance

4. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights and the Government of Albania agreed to cooperate on a programme of technical assistance for Albania on the basis of an agreement signed in February 1992. In May 1992 a staff member of the Centre for Human Rights engaged in informal consultations with the Government of Albania regarding the implementation of the Agreement. On 8 September 1992, the Government of Albania officially requested that the Centre for Human Rights conduct a mission to assess Albania's needs for technical assistance in the human rights field. The needs assessment mission was conducted from 4 to 12 November 1992 by two staff members of the Centre for Human Rights, assisted by a consultant from the University of Minnesota Law School. As a result of this mission a country programme of assistance for Albania was prepared.

5. The first component of the programme was a training course, organized by the Centre for Human Rights, for Albanian law enforcement officials, police, military and prison personnel on human rights in the administration of justice, which was held at Tirana from 2 to 6 November 1992.

6. Another component of the programme was a training seminar, Human Rights in the Administration of Justice, organized by the Centre for Human Rights for Albanian judges and lawyers, held at Tirana from 12 to 15 April 1993; some 70 judges and lawyers participated. As part of the training seminar, the Centre financed the translation into Albanian and the printing of the following international human rights instruments: (i) Universal Declaration of Human Rights; (ii) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; (iii) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; (iv) Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; (v) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; (vi) Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials; (vii) United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("The Beijing Rules"); (viii) Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary; (ix) Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and (x) Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors.

7. Two government officials, one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a judge from the Tirana Court of Justice, were chosen by the Government of Albania to participate in the fellowship programme in the field of human rights, conducted at Geneva and at Strasbourg in collaboration with the International Institute of Human Rights.

8. Under the advisory services programme, three other government officials, one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one from the Ministry of Justice and one from the Ministry of Education, received fellowships to participate in the training course on the preparation of reports required under the United Nations human rights treaties, held at Geneva in November 1993.

9. In cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the Centre for Human Rights sent two experts to Albania in January 1994. The two experts, one from the University of Gent (Belgium) and another from the Cour de Cassation in

Paris (France), provided legal assistance to the Ministry in the drafting of legislation on the administration of juvenile justice and the legal regulation of acts of civil registration.

10. The Centre for Human Rights sent an expert, Ms. Laurie Wiseberg, Executive Director of Human Rights Internet (Canada), to Albania from 18 to 22 July 1994 to determine the feasibility of establishing a documentation and research centre on human rights, as envisaged in component IV, "Basic library and documentation unit on human rights", of the February 1992 Agreement.

11. Based on the expert's recommendations, officials of the Centre for Human Rights have discussed informally with the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations Office at Geneva the possibility of redeploying the budget allocations and establishing the documentation and research centre on human rights as early as possible in 1995.

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